the tribes of CHITTAGONG HILL TRACTS

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THE TRIBES OF CHITTAGONG HILL TRACTS

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1. THE TRIBES OF CHITTAGONG HILL TRACTS

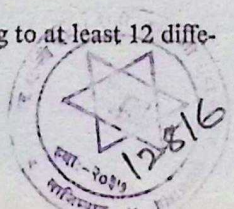
The highlands of East Pakistan, administratively known as the Chittagong Hill Tracts District, are situated between 21°15′ and 23°45′ north latitude, and between 91°45′ and 92°50′ east longitude, and extend over an area of 5,093 sq. miles from the foot-hills of the Tripura State of India in the north to the border of the Akyab District of Burma in the south, and from the Lushai hills and the Arakan mountains in the east to the coastal plains of Chittagong Division in the west. The entire area is a mass of sub-tropical jungle, fed by heavy monsoons, where breeds a wild profusion of beasts and birds in the narrow valleys flanked by steep hills, criss-crossed with rivers and streams.

The District is divided into four main valleys constituted by its four principal rivers, the Feni, the Karnaphuli, the Sangu, and the Matamohri, and their tributaries, and is marked by chains of low hills which traverse the District from end to end, running in a north-westerly direction.

The hills range in height from a few hundred to four thousand feet. The highest hills are Keokradong (4,034 feet) to the east of the District, and Pyramid Hill (3,016 feet) in the same area.

Fed by torrential rains and washed by perennial floods, the entire area is a thick green mass of wild growth consisting of a variety of plants, creepers, shrubs and trees, including bamboo, banana, cane, teak, garjan, chaul-mugra and other locally known trees, for extracting timber or oil-bearing seeds. The Bandarban, meaning the 'Border Forest', or the 'Monkey Forest', which extends from the heart of the Hill Tracts down to the Reserve Forest on the Akyab border in the south, provides a natural breeding ground for almost every species of tropical bird and animal life, from colourful parrot and cuckoo to wild elephant and double-horned rhinoceros, black bear and wild boar, python and barking deer, monkey and *langoor*, and, of course, the royal Bengal tiger. But more than this, these sheltered, impenetrable forests are the rendezvous of some of the most primitive tribes, who are known to have existed there since time immemorial or migrated from the neighbouring hills and lived all along in isolation from the rest of the civilized world.

Broadly estimated, there are about 300,000 persons belonging to at least 12 diffe-



rent tribes who inhabit the Chittagong Hill Tracts, but the most primitive of them, like the Murungs, live mainly in the Bandarban forest area. The largest in number, and comparatively more civilized than the rest, are the Chakmas, about 125,000, who are Buddhist by faith. The next in importance are the Moghs, about 66,000, who are also Buddhist, while the Tipperas, about 37,000, profess a form of Hinduism. The Murungs, who are not more than 16,000 in number, have a tribal religion of their own and are most conspicuous in their dress and way of living. The smaller tribes, called the Tanchangya, Kuki, Khami, Khyang, Riang, Lushai, Chaks, Banjogi and Pankhu live in difficult hilly areas and are just a few hundred each in population.

These tribes are ethnically different from the plainsmen of East Pakistan and appear to have some racial link with the primitive tribes of the vast belt extending from Tibet down to Thailand. They are mostly wheat-coloured, sometimes brownish in complexion, and have straight black hair, with medium height and strong build, but unlike the Tibetans or the Mongoloids, they mostly have straight noses, with cheek bones not very prominent, nor eyes so narrow.

The tribes have been roughly divided into two broad categories:

(i) The *Khyoungtha*, or 'Children of the River'. These are the tribes who mostly live along the river banks and are considered to be of the Arakanese origin, speaking the ancient Arakanese dialect and conforming to Buddhist religion and customs.

(ii) The *Toungtha*, or 'Children of the Hills', who are of mixed origin, if not the original inhabitants of the Hill Tracts. They speak numerous dialects and are comparatively more primitive than the Khyoungtha. The Chakmas and the Moghs are the main tribes belonging to the Khyoungtha group, while the Tipperas, Murungs, Pankhus, Lushais and Kukis, with their offshoots, are known as the Toungtha. A greater portion of these hill tribes at present living in this area are believed to have come from the Arakan hills in Burma. Their migration, in some measures was due to their exodus as a result of the Burmese War of 1824 which ended in the annexation of Arakan to the British territory.

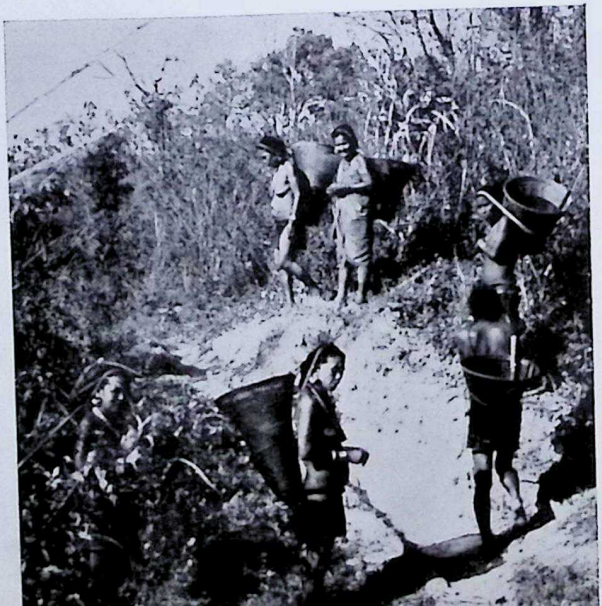
The origin of these tribes is still a matter of debate, as the available information about their origin and past history is meagre and mostly unreliable. They are divided into *Kin* groups or *Septs*. The Chakmas, having the largest population in the area, have 24 Septs. The Moghs have 21, and the Murungs, being a small group, had only 5 according to the Census Report of 1909, but at present the number of Septs among them is much larger.

ADMINISTRATION

The Hill Tracts District, with headquarters at Rangamati (population: 6,416) is administered by a Deputy Commissioner in all Civil, Criminal, Revenue and other matters. He is responsible to the Governor for the administration of the District through the Commissioner of the Chittagong Division and the Member of the Board of Revenue. All officers, including those of the technical services like Forestry, Health, Education, Public Works etc., posted to the District, are subject to general supervision and control of the Deputy Commissioner. To further facilitate administrative work, the Hill Tracts District has been divided into three Sub-divisions with

President Ayub with the three tribal chiefs of the Chittagong Hill Tracts at the foundation-stone laying ceremony of the new town of Rangamati, District Headquarters of the area.

A Charming scene along the Matamohri river leading to the heart of the Bandarban forest.



A group of Murung women seen in the Bandarban forest.

headquarters at Rangamati, Ramgarh (population: 4,539) and Bandarban (population · 3,047), each under a Sub-divisional Officer.

Corresponding to these three Sub-divisions, the District is divided into three 'Circles'—the Chakma, the Mong, and the Bohmong Circle, with a Tribal Chief or Raja, incharge of each. The Chakma Circle approximately occupies the centre; the Mong Circle covers the north and north-west, and the Bohmong Circle occupies the south and south-west of the Hill Tracts District.

The Tribal Chiefs form the Advisory Council to the Deputy Commissioner and assist him with information and advice on all matters concerning the administration of their respective Circles. They exercise their influence in prompt enforcement of all orders of the Deputy Commissioner in efficient management of the *Mouzas* in which each Circle has been divided.

Each *Mouza*, in turn, consists of a number of villages or settlements whose affairs are managed by a local Headman in respect of collection of revenue, preservation of public peace, and for administration of the tribal affairs. The Tribal Chiefs try such cases of the tribesmen in their respective Circles as are referred to them after the decisions of the Headmen or by the Headmen themselves. They have the power of imposing a fine upto Rs. 50/- (roughly £3/-), of enforcing restitution and of retention, subject to the final orders of the Deputy Commissioner in the matter. The Deputy Commissioner has general, revisional and concurrent jurisdiction over all powers exercised by the Chiefs and the Headmen under the rules. In the appointment of Headmen or their dismissal for misconduct, the Deputy Commissioner consults the Chiefs concerned. The Deputy Commissioner is, thus, responsible for the general administration of the District, assisted by the Civil and Technical officers, while the three Tribal Chiefs are responsible for efficient management of the internal affairs of their respective Circles.

JHOOM CULTIVATION

The tribal folk are mostly agriculturists, and the method of cultivation pursued in the hills is common to all the tribes. Indeed, wherever hill tribes are found throughout Indo-Pakistan Sub-continent, they follow a special mode of cultivating the earth, known as 'Toung-ya' in Burma and Arakan, or 'Dhai-ya' in the Central Provinces of India, while here it is usually called 'Jhoom', and the hillmen pursuing it are known as '*Jhoomiahs*'.

The hill slopes selected for the purpose are cleared of the bamboo and other wild growth, which is allowed to dry in the sun and thereafter set on fire before the monsoons. The area is then cleared of the debris, and as soon as the first showers fall and soak the soil, it is planted with mixed seeds of paddy, cotton, maize, sesamum, pumpkin, melon and yam. The seeds are all put together in a small basket hanging at the back of the sower who deposits each seed, as it comes to his hand, into a small hole in the ground which he makes with a dagger-like long instrument, called 'Dao', without caring which one he is dropping where.

The quantity of the paddy is more than the other seeds sown in this process, as rice is their staple diet and they want to grow more of it.

The ashes of burnt trees on the Jhoom slopes serve as a natural manure, and the heavy rainfall provides life-giving water to the crops. The maize ripens by the middle of August, the vegetables and grains are harvested in September, and cotton, tobacco and paddy are brought home in November andDecember.This method of cultivation entails great labour and incessant care, as the young plants need constant weeding and guarding against the depredations of wild animals and birds. The outcome is uncertain, because the crop depends on the right quantity of rainfall at proper time and may totally fail if there is a drought or flood. A successful Jhoom crop, however, provides as much as three to four times the normal annual needs of a family.

The Jhoom holdings are not controlled by the rules and regulations of the plains. There is no formal deed or legal title over any land by an ordinary hillman in the District, nor do they bother much about proprietary ownership. Once a particular piece of land is cultivated and marked off by a hillman, no one attempts to forcibly dislodge him from it. In fact, the hillmen are only content to 'use' the land and not to own it. They are, therefore, not much concerned for their 'rights' over it. The Circle Chiefs, however, have their own personal estates as private property, which are distinct from the rest of the forest lands.

IMPORTANCE OF BAMBOO

Bamboo grows in abundance in the forest and constitutes the backbone of economy of the Hill people. There are eleven varieties of bamboo found in this area. The hillmen turn it into all kinds of conceivable household objects of daily use with astonishing skill, as well as utilize it for most of their arts and crafts. According to an old account, "the bamboo is literally his staff of life. He builds his house of the bamboo; he fertilizes his fields with its ashes; of its stem he makes vessels in which to carry water; with two bits of bamboo he can produce fire; its young and succulent shoots provide a dainty dinner dish; and he weaves his sleeping mat of fine slips thereof. The instruments with which his women weave their cotton are of bamboo. He makes drinking-cups of it, and his head at night rests on a bamboo pillow; his forts are built of it; he catches fish, makes baskets and stools, and thatches his house with the help of the bamboo; and from bamboo ashes he obtains potash. Finally, his funeral pile is lighted with bamboo. The hillman would die without the bamboo, and the thing he finds hardest of credence is that in other countries the bamboo does not grow, and that men live in ignorance of it".

The general style of their houses is also identical. These are built entirely of bamboo on high stilts, 9 to 15 feet above the ground. The access to each house is provided by a roughly hewn step-ladder of a tree trunk. The recess below the house, provided by the high platform, is used for domestic cattle, pigs, goats and poultry.

Each house has a set pattern of rooms, consisting of the main central hall, an adjoining open courtyard and a few attached living rooms, all well built and ventilated with sliding windows. The hall is generally squarish, measuring anywhere between 25 ft. and 40 ft. on either side, and the attached living rooms, each about 15 ft. x 25 ft. The courtyard, adjoining the hall, is also squarish, ranging between 20 ft. and 25 ft.

on either side and protected at the three ends by a 4 to 5 ft. high bamboo screen.

In the matter of accommodation, the apartments are allotted with due regard to seniority and the requirements of the married members are attended to first. The main hall is used as a common living room by the entire family, where there is also a fireplace and a water storage. This room is also used for entertaining guests and for storing various household objects in baskets such as cotton, paddy, weaving implements, clothings, beddings, utensils, musical instruments, fishing nets, weapons etc.

The tribesmen practice various arts other than agriculture, fishing and hunting, such as basket-making, weaving their own dresses and certain amount of crude woodwork. They do not know any metal work or pottery-making for which they have to depend entirely on the plainsmen who live as traders and craftsmen in the few jungle 'bazaars' and hold weekly 'markets'. Among these craftsmen, the blacksmith is an essential element in the economy of these people.

The dress of these hillmen varies with the tribe. The Chakma men wear homespun short loin-cloth of white colour. Their chief weapon is an iron *Dao*, commonly known as *Tagal*, with which they not only carry on their agriculture but also perform various sorts of domestic jobs like chopping of wood, making bamboo huts, fences, door-mats, fish tackles, bamboo catapults and other things. Chakma women wear a long sarong-like skirt made of a rectangular piece of blue cloth with a broad red stripe and yellow-and-green designs, which they wrap round the lower half of their body and tuck in at the waist. To this, they add a breast-cloth, called *Khadi*, and also at times a white turban.

CHAKMA

The *Chakmas* have their own history, folk-lore and mythology, and by religion they are Buddhists, but they observe many tribal rites, specially during birth, marriage and cremation. They have their own script and religious literature called the '*Taras*'.

The Chakmas are comparatively more intelligent and progressive than the rest of the Chittagong Hill tribes. They possess a retentive memory, and some of their old proverbs given below, amply prove their level of intelligence:

1. Much sharpening blunts a knife, much scolding makes a child shameless.
2. He got angry with the rat and set fire to the house.
3. Every tank will not produce water lilies.
4. It is only the pupils who become masters.
5. The bright ideas of fools always came afterwards.
6. Bamboos are tied with bamboos, elephants are caught by elephants.
7. Scorch the bottom of a new boat, beat a new wife.
8. Water has no bones, a king no relations.
9. Old cows like young grass, old men like young wives.
10. A brave man takes heads, but a wise man takes cities.
11. A fool will fear death, the wise the hereafter.
12. If you smell a flower too long, you lose its scent.

Jhooming is the main occupation and source of livelihood of these people. Ploughing was introduced on the riverside lands by the Chakmas in the late 19th century,

but in the interior the Jhoom cultivation continues as the only feasible method of agriculture by the majority of tribesmen.

The Chakmas are good weavers also, and the unmarried girls have to weave out at least half a dozen shawls or stoles, called *Alam*, with colourful, intricate designs, before they can be considered for marriage in the tribe.

When a Chakma lad attains a marriageable age, his parents or guardians select a suitable girl and negotiations are made with her parents through a third person. The consent of the boy and the girl is, however, taken before starting negotiations.

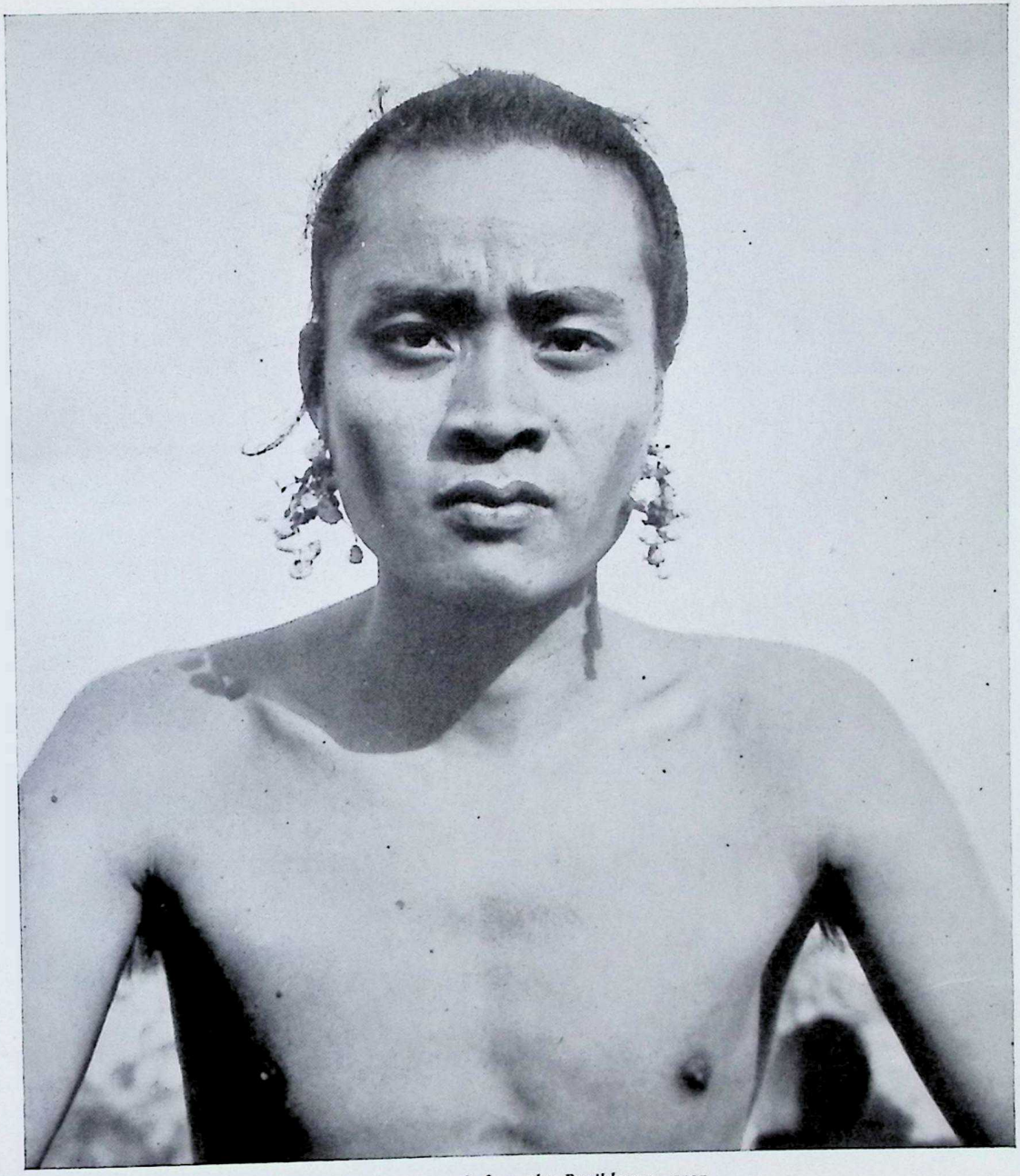
It is equally interesting to note that if the youth chooses to marry a certain girl in spite of the parents' unwillingness, he can do so on his own. Polygamy is permitted though not prevalent, and remarriage of widows is allowed. Divorce from either side can be obtained with the consent of the Headman on grounds of adultery, contagious or incurable disease, neglect of household duties, cruelty, impotency or desertion.

After settling the terms of marriage, the bridegroom's party has to go with presents, clothes and jewellery to the bride's house, a day before the wedding. In the evening the bride is dressed up with new clothes and ornaments, and the whole night is given up to festivities. The next day, after the morning meals, the bridegroom's party escorts the bride to his house, where the actual wedding ceremony takes place in the evening. The bride and the bridegroom are seated beside each other in the centre of the hall where a male and a female relation of the groom tie the 'Jargat', or a long piece of white cloth, around their waists, thus, binding the couple together. After this act, the bride has to put a morsel of cooked rice and a *Pan* (Betel-leaf) in the mouth of the bridegroom who in turn has to serve the bride in the same manner. The cloth around their waists is then loosened and both the bride and the groom have to immediately spring upon their feet. In this process one that stands up first is believed to dominate over the other during their married life.

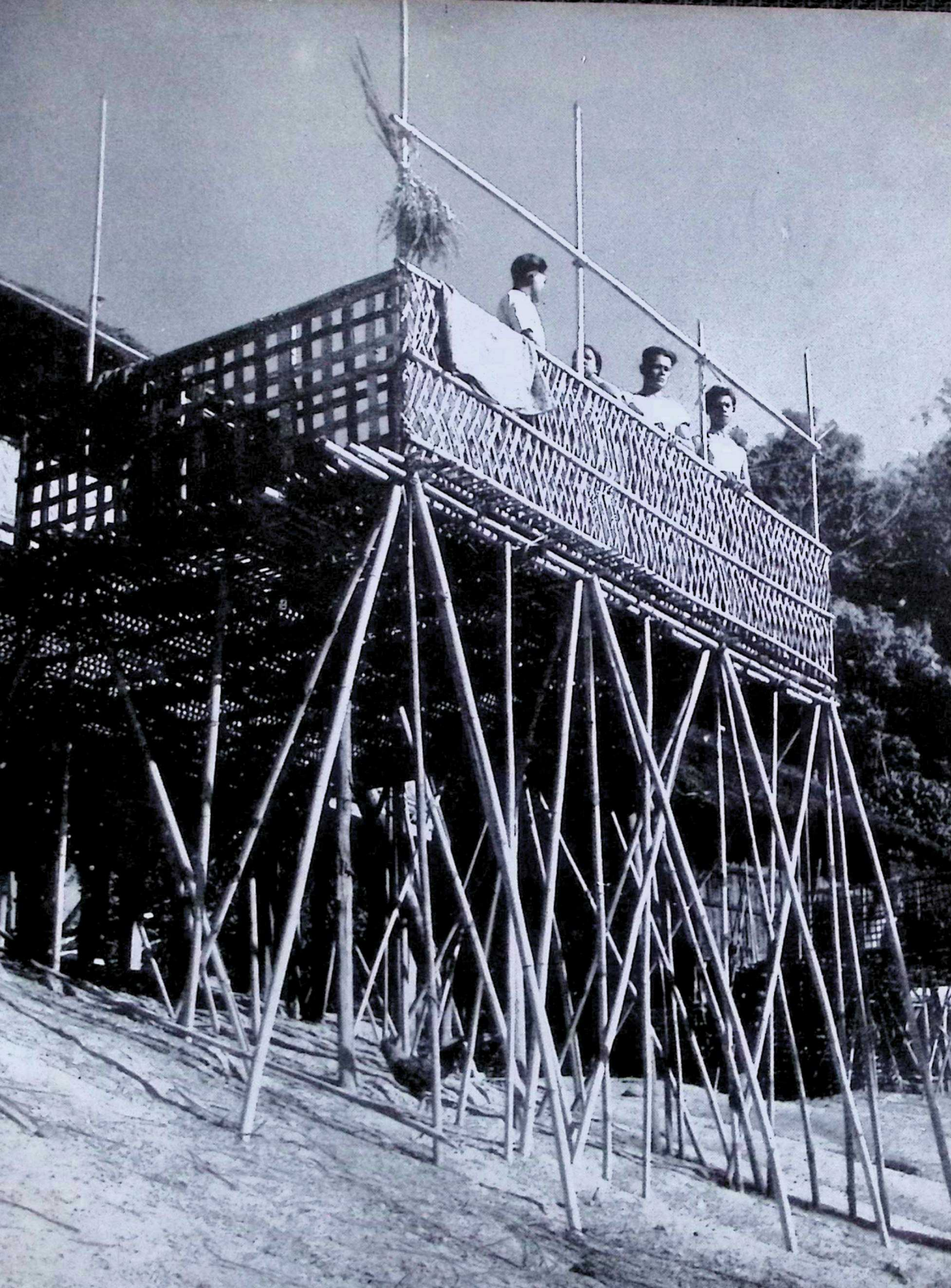
The couple is now considered duly married but has to revisit the bride's house for the final ceremony. Here the newly-weds are blessed by the elders of the bride's family by offering them a little quantity of paddy, cotton and *Durba*, a kind of grass. On the same day, or the day following, the couple is again tied together with a piece of cloth around their waists, and the ceremony of feeding and jumping is, thus, repeated.

The marriage price is determined according to the status of the contracting parties. This amount is spent on feasting by the bride's family. In case of marriage by elopement, the parents of the girl can demand her restitution on three occasions. But if a young man can successfully bring off a fourth elopement, the couple is considered to be legally wedded, without making any further payment to the bride's parents.

The Chakmas cremate their dead except in the case of persons dying of smallpox or cholera, when the corpse is buried away from the village by the riverside. Mourning is observed for six days, during which the relations abstain from taking any meat or fish, and the sons of the dead person have to shave their heads. On the seventh morning, they visit the spot where the body was cremated and lay out a complete meal alongwith wine for the departed spirit. The place is enclosed with a



A Murung youth from the Renikhyong area.



bamboo fence and a number of fine muslin or gauze streamers are hoisted within the enclosure on tall bamboo poles. Within the village itself, the *Sraddha* ceremony is held by feeding the village community and near relations, according to the capacity of the family, and prayers are offered by the priest for the salvation of the departed person.

MOGH

The *Moghs* form the second largest tribe in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. They are scattered all over the area, but the majority of them occupy the Mong and the Bohmong Circles. The term 'Mogh' is popularly used for robbers and pirates by the plainsmen to which these people seriously object. They, therefore, call themselves 'Marma', which is an Arakanese word, meaning 'Burmese'. Their dialect, known as 'Moghi', is a corrupt form of the Arakanese language, written in Burmese characters.

The Mogh tribe is divided into numerous *Septs* named after the profession, place of original residence, or any peculiarity of the common ancestry. This tribe appears to have migrated from the Arakan Hills, as both Burmese and English accounts of the eighteenth century make frequent references to the Marma refugees who were driven out of Arakan by the Burmese invaders in 1783-84. They moved through the Matamohri Valley into Cox's Bazaar area in the south, and from there scattered into the interior of the Hill Tracts. In fact, there were two separate waves of immigration about the same time: one which settled in the Mong Circle in the north, and the other which occupied the Bohmong Circle in the south.

Because of their long association with the Chakmas, the Moghs have been greatly influenced by them in dress, customs and manners. Normally, however, a Mogh wears a *lungi*—a sheet of soft cotton cloth reaching from the waist to below the knees, a short white or black jacket with loose sleeves, buttoned or tied at the neck, and a turban of white cloth, which he adjusts in a peculiar fashion. The well-to-do people use silk for both *lungi* and the jacket.

The Mogh girls usually have attractive features and 'fascinating little body'. They dress their hair very nicely, gathering them from the back and tying them up neatly in a knot on top to which a silver comb or hair-pin is attached. On ceremonial occasions, they tie a colourful silk scarf around their shoulders and neck. They wear a tastefully designed home-spun breast-cloth alongwith a coloured skirt called '*Thani*'. The skirt is worn tightly around the waist, giving a shapely curve to the body. They also wear a variety of silver ornaments such as bracelets, necklaces, armlets, anklets, earrings and head-pins.

Although the Moghs are Buddhist by faith, in actual practice certain elements of animism seem to have crept into their pantheon. Thus a great variety of evil spirits is believed to influence their lives and activities. They are also known for great depth of religious sentiments although they do not rigidly follow the Buddhist principles in matters of eating and drinking.

The Moghs are extremely clannish in matters of marriage, and clan endogamy is strictly observed. Therefore, the genealogy of each contracting party is carefully studied in order to avoid relations leading to incestuous degree. The only exception

to this endogamous contract is allowed for a widow who may remarry a man from outside her clan, normally inferior to hers, and the groom so selected is younger than herself in age. At present, however, there is very little difference between the Moghs and the Chakmas regarding the customs about marriage, elopement, inheritance, disposal of the dead and mode of living. The only difference in the observance of their death rites is that the near blood relations of the dead person do not abstain from meat or fish during the mourning period, nor do his sons have to shave their heads after the *Sraddha* ceremony.

The Mogh society is patrilineal, where the father is the head of the family, and in matters of succession the property is passed on to the eldest son. But when there is a division of property among several sons, one-half goes to the eldest, one-quarter to the next son, and the remaining quarter is shared among the other sons. The daughters are totally excluded from paternal property. In the event of there being no male heirs, the succession falls in the female line.

MURUNG OR MRO

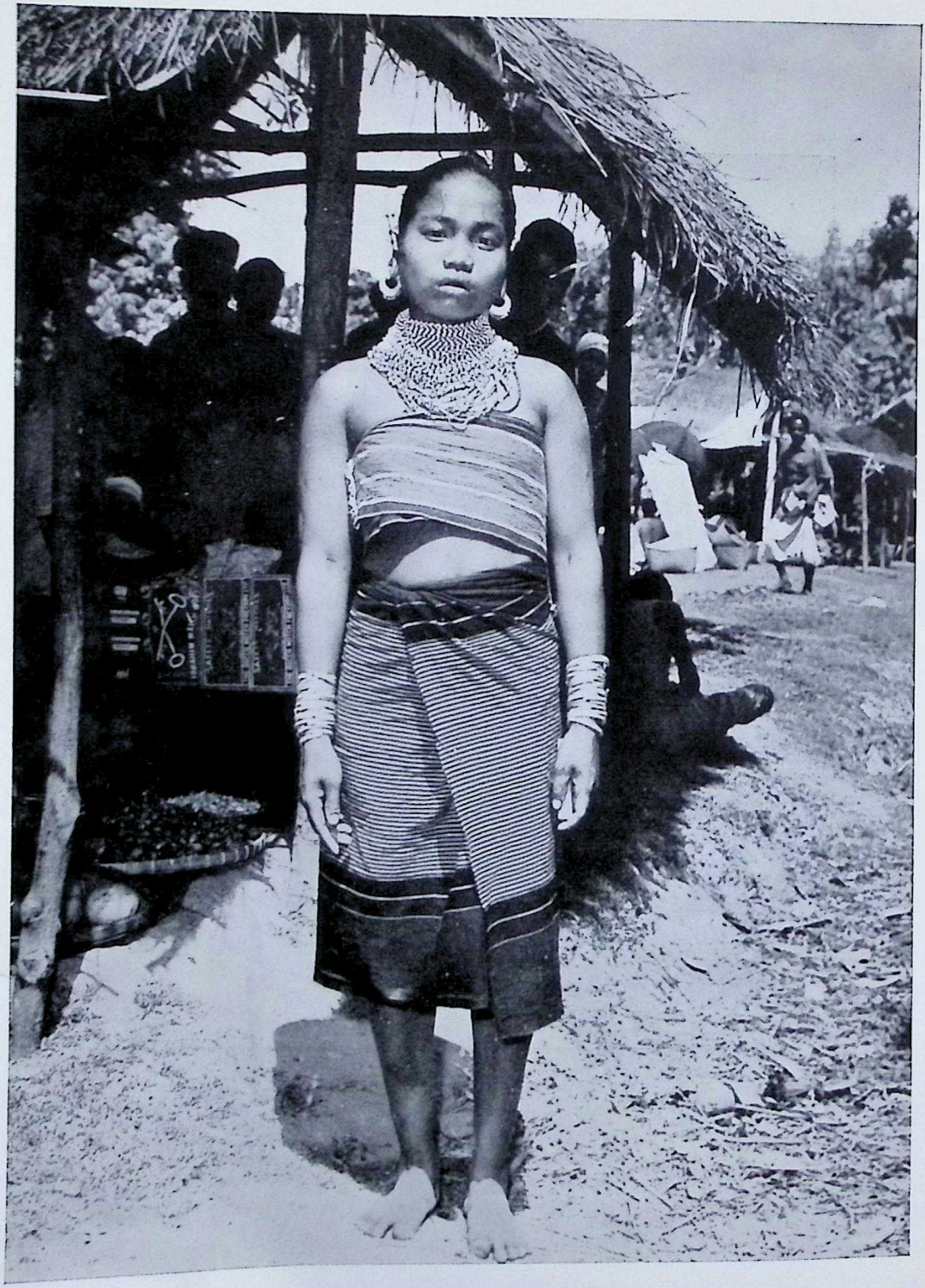
Among the most ancient, and perhaps the original inhabitants of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, are the *Murungs*. The majority of these people live in the Bohmong Circle in the heart of the Bandarban forest. The entire Murung population of about 16,000 souls lies scattered in the jungle valleys, with small settlements of 10 to 15 families each, nestled amidst steep hills, interspersed with numerous rivulets and streams.

The tribe is known amongst themselves as 'Mro', but other hill tribes and plainsmen refer to them as 'Murung'. The Murungs still maintain a very primitive way of life, as they have had very little contact with the people outside their jungle environments, with the result that their life and customs have remained undisturbed by outside influences. Naturally, therefore, these people are very timid and keep very much to themselves. Very little is known about their origin, but some anthropologists believe that they originally came from Arakan and that some of the people belonging to this tribe are still found in the hill tracts of Burma and Akyab District. An old history of Arakan in Burmese language, the 'Rajaweng', states that 'Mro' was once king of Arakan in the fourteenth century A.D. The Murungs would admit no stranger into their tribe, and are despised as wild men by the Khyoungtha, or 'Children of the River'. They are tributary to the Bohmong Chief of Arakanese stock residing at present at Bandarban.

The Murungs have a social order distinct from the rest, with a uniform style of houses, dress, food, customs and manners. They speak a dialect of their own, have their own dances, music and love-songs, and follow a rigid code of morals, without professing any particular faith. They depend on agriculture by Jhooming and with the exception of salt, kerosene oil, and a few other essentials of life, they are self-sufficient in their needs. They do not have any craftsmen or artisans, masons or carpenters, blacksmiths or potters, weavers or barbers in their society and, thus, each family does everything for itself, getting the help of neighbours only in building a house or for Jhooming.

As the Murungs live under the joint-family system, they have to build large enough

Husking rice is part of a woman's daily routine in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.



A Tippera girl dressed in all the finery for the jungle bazaar.

houses to accommodate separately each married couple in the family. The houses are generally constructed by the hill-sides on strong bamboo platforms, about 9 to 12 feet high, as a protection against floods and beasts. The Murungs, however, have another explanation for building their houses on high elevation. According to them, long long ago, a Murung family built a house on the ground level. When a child was born to them, the ants and other insects from the jungle got into the house and began to bite the baby. Hearing the cries of the child, an old Murung advised its parents to build the house high enough from the ground for protection against the insects and beasts, and also for getting fresh breeze for keeping good health. From then on, no Murung builds his house on the ground level.

The structure consists mainly of bamboo, and wooden logs are used only as pillars to support the roof. Each house has a set pattern of rooms, consisting of the main hall, the adjoining open courtyard and a few attached rooms, as explained in the foregoing pages.

A corner of the hall is reserved for cooking, and there a mud platform, measuring about $4\frac{1}{2}'$ by $4\frac{1}{2}'$ is made, about 6 inches high from the floor. On the platform they make a mud hearth for cooking food with jungle wood. In another corner of the hall, they reserve a place, about 6′ by 9′ for storing drinking water in small pitchers made of pumpkin or gourd. For the storage of grain and other products, each attached room has a large, round bin made of cane and bamboo. Each bin can easily contain about a ton of paddy or other crops to meet the family's needs for a year.

Although the Murungs are agriculturists by profession, they are not used to plough-cultivation and practise their traditional method of Jhooming in raising the crops. There is a clear division of labour between the two sexes, but in some cases they co-operate with one another, as may be seen below:—

	Men		Women
1.	Jhooming and cutting.	1.	Cleaning and sweeping the house.
2.	Basket and mat-making.	2.	Collecting fuel from the jungle.
3.	Ginning cotton.	3.	Fetching water from streams.
4.	Building bamboo houses.	4.	Spinning and weaving of loin-cloths and *durees* (rough cotton drapery) for the family.
5.	Fencing of Jhoom fields.	5.	Helping in Jhooming, collecting grain and husking rice.
6.	Simple carpentary—making ladders, receptacles, bowls etc.	6.	Care of children.
7.	Fishing in small streams.	7.	Marketing of products and purchasing, when required.
8.	Milking of cows and goats.	8.	Cooking food.

It will be seen that the Murung women work harder than their men-folk and, therefore, according to their custom, a girl's age must be more than that of the boy at the time of their marriage. The idea behind this practice is that the newly married

woman should be of greater help to both her husband and his family.

LOVE AND MARRIAGE

The selection of the match does not depend much on the choice of the parents but on the couple itself. It is customary for the eligible bachelors in the village to frequent the house of a young maiden and spend long evening hours with her, chatting and singing together in the presence of her parents. The songs are mostly of love and yearning, full of tender sentiments and devotion. Here is an English rendering of one such song:

"Your face, my sweetheart, is as beautiful as the lotus. So even though you are going away from me, I shall feel your presence in the lotus, and seek solace by loving it in your absence."

The young maiden replies in praise of her lover:

"How beautiful you are, my dearest! You are like the 'LUNG-O YUR', or the Scarlet Lady Fly, velvety and shining, in my green jungle valleys :"

The standard of male beauty, among the Murung maidens, is equally interesting to note. Their ideal youth is a well-built, wheat-complexioned person, having long hair tied at the top like a bun. He should have painted his cheeks and forehead with round patches of crimson colour, and have colourful flowers in the pierced lobes of his ears. His teeth should be coal-black and he should be able to sing love-songs and play music on the reed pipes. Without such make-up and accomplishments, no maiden would care to respond to any youth.

The girl is, thus, given ample opportunity to select a young man of her choice during these meetings which sometimes continue for months, until one night the girl suddenly elopes with the youth of her choice. On the following day, the couple is married in the house of the boy, without informing the parents of the girl. The marriage is, thus, performed hurriedly for the boy to have a claim over the girl. However, the parents of the girl make a search for their daughter and go to the house of the boy to find out as to how much money he has promised her as the marriage price. Usually the price comes to about Rs. 300 (approximately £ 23/-) payable by the parents of the groom after the consummation of the marriage. It is worked out in a very interesting manner: Rs. 150 is fixed as the price of the girl's body; Rs. 10 as the cost of the breast-feeding by her mother, and the rest is divided into the cost of the wraps, loin-cloths, home-spun sheets, mats and other articles prepared by the girl in her house, besides the cost of a sword, an arrow, a pick-axe, a spear and a Dao which the bridegroom is required to present as wedding gifts to the parents of the bride after the marriage.

If the parents of the girl are satisfied with the price, and if there is no social barrier against the boy, they generally agree to the marriage. A date is then fixed to hand over the money and the gifts to the bride's parents. The entire amount has to be paid in silver coins and not in paper currency, but as silver coins are rarely available in

the jungle, paper notes are acceptable against the silver coins at half their face value.

If, however, the parents of the girl do not agree to the marriage for any reason, a meeting of the village elders is held to decide whether the objection raised by the parents of the girl is justified or not. If the boy is found guilty of forcing the girl to elope with him, he has to pay a fine of Rs. 70 (about £5/10) to the girl's parents; but if the girl is found responsible for forcing the boy to elopement, she is fined an equivalent of £ 2/- to be paid to the other party. Besides, it is customary for the boy, if found guilty, to slaughter a pig and distribute its meat among the people of his village by going to each house personally.

It is, however, interesting to note that investigations and decisions of the elders about fixing the responsibility for elopement, settling the price of the bride, fixing the date for handing over cash and gifts to the parents of the girl, and of final agreement about the marriage, all take place after the marriage ceremony has been secretly performed by the groom's parents.

For the wedding, the bride has to go to the house of the groom along with the elders of her village and her father. No female is allowed to accompany her and no special dress, excepting the usual wrap, is worn by the bride at the time of marriage. Her face is decorated with large round patches of scarlet colour on the cheeks and the forehead, with lips and teeth stained pink-rose, the hair tied on top in the form of a bun, bedecked with flowers or glass-beads, and wearing strings of colourful beads around her neck. Bangles, armlets, anklets and girdles made of aluminium or cheap white metal, purchased from the forest bazaars run by plainsmen, may be worn by the girl if she possesses them. The only distinction between the bride and other unmarried girls is that she has to have her palms painted red as well, for the occasion.

The marriage ceremony is conducted by an elder of the groom's village, as the Murungs have no priests or religious heads among themselves. In fact, they do not have any church nor do they worship any gods. Actually, they have a tribal religion of their own as a result of which they do not want to lose their traditions and social characteristics which are distinct from other tribesmen.

The marriage ceremony is a simple affair: both bride and the bridegroom are seated amidst the wedding party. An elder of the groom's village ties a black cotton thread, containing a small bit of the right ear of a freshly slaughtered pig, around the right wrist of both bride and bridegroom. A similar thread, containing a bit each of the pig's ear, is then put around the wrists of the other members of the groom's family present on the occasion. After this ceremony, a fine paste of turmeric and rice is made with water and applied by the same person as a finger mark on the forehead and the centre of the breast and back of the bride and the bridegroom. The elder then blesses the couple for a happy married life and declares them man and wife. The slaughtered pig is then cooked and all present enjoy a wedding feast of curry and rice, followed by lots of drinking of the home-made rice wine. No Murung festival can be imagined without drinking, but strangely enough no music or dance is allowed on the occasion of marriage.

MURUNG DANCES

The Murungs are, nevertheless, very fond of music and dance. Their orchestra

comprises a two-sided drum played by hand, and a number of pipes of different sizes, varying in length, from 6 inches to about 18 feet, fitted into a pumpkin base. Each musical instrument contains a number of pipes, the smaller ones made from the reed and the larger ones from the bamboo. The overall effect is of soft drone, punctuated with the beats of the drum.

In a dance performance, usually half a dozen unmarried girls and a dozen or so instrument players participate. No married woman is allowed to dance on any occasion. The dancers, followed immediately by the instrument players, form a small circle and move with slow steps around a central object.

The dance tune is quite rhythmic and pleasing to the ear, but there is hardly any variation in it. The dancers change their steps while moving in a circle; at times they also face the musicians in a single file and dance by taking forward and backward steps in turn. According to the foot-movement, they have four different dances or 'PLYS': PLY-SHING; CHAT-CHET PLY; DENGRAM-TEK PLY, and ROW-LATA-TING PLY, but the accompanying music in each case hardly shows any variation in the tune.

The dancers put on jingling anklets of aluminium to keep time and produce a musical effect by their foot-work. The dress remains the usual wrap of dark-blue home-spun, except on occasions when they have to give a performance before outsiders. The girls then are asked to drape their bodies with shawls or sheets of cloth in which they naturally feel quite awkward.

For the make-up, the dancers bedeck themselves with flowers and beads and put on wide patches of red colour on their cheeks and forehead. Both lips and teeth are also stained with a pink pigment.

COW KILLING CEREMONY

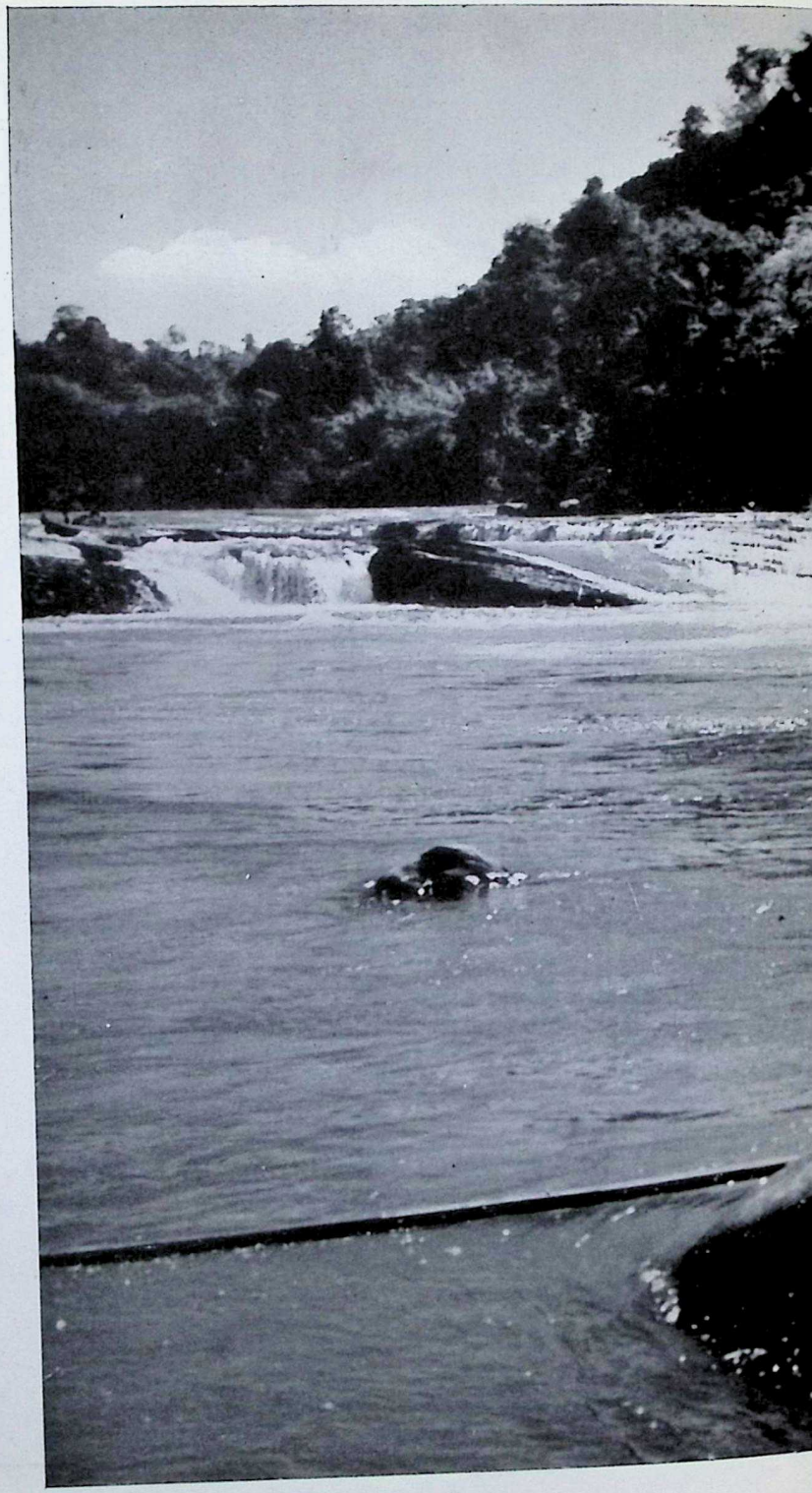
There are few special occasions among the Murungs for dancing and music. One such occasion is when the Jhoom crop is gathered and the rich amongst them kill a cow and feed their neighbours to the accompaniment of drinking and dancing.

The cow, according to a Murung tradition, is guilty of having eaten up the banana leaves on which their fore-fathers had received their religious scriptures from the Almighty Spirit—*Torai*. This, they believe, resulted in their loss of faith, and for this 'sacrilegious' act, the cow is punished annually at the time of harvesting or when there is a calamity in the shape of an epidemic or flood.

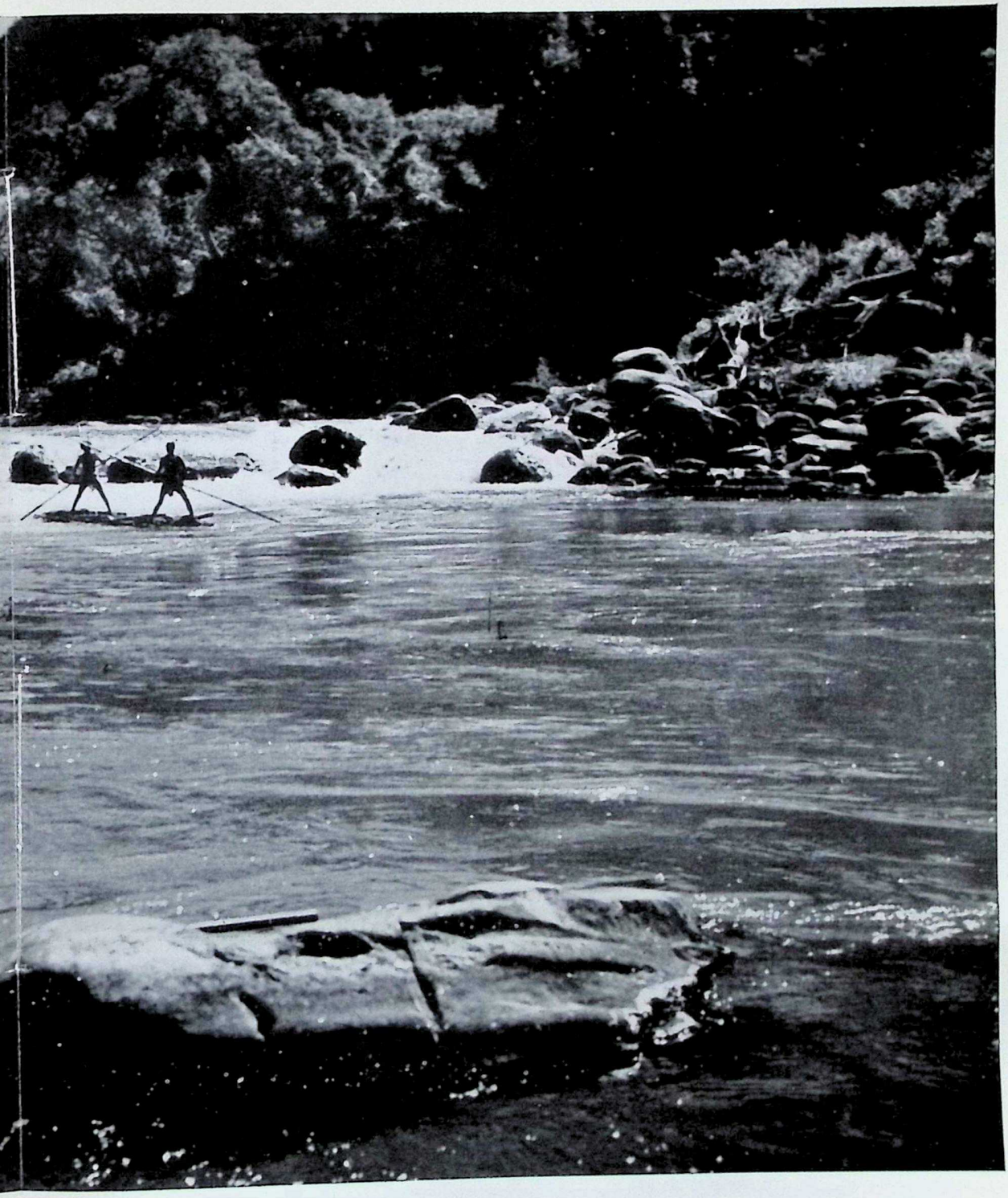
And so the cow-killing ceremony, called *Sachiya Kom*, by the Murungs, takes place in a spirit of gaiety, accompanied by drinking and dancing. On this occasion a cow is tied to a thick stake. The young maidens and youth then drink and dance around the animal for the whole night.

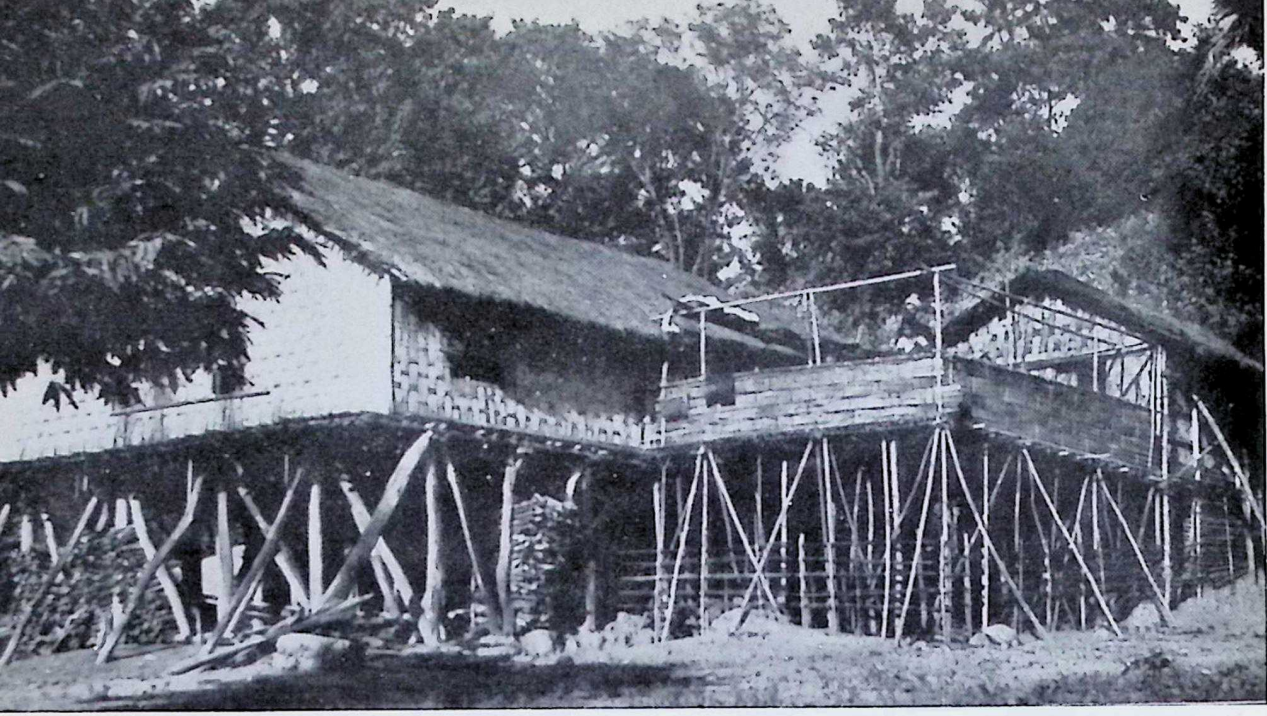
Next morning, they resume the dance and continue till the afternoon, when the Master of Ceremonies among them directs a youngman to spear the sacrificial cow. The youth dashes towards the animal while dancing and music continue, and aiming at its heart, strikes the spear with immense force. Hardly a second blow is necessary, as the cow collapses at the very first stab and dies within minutes. The animal's tongue is then pulled out and cut off for display as a revenge against 'the cursed cow'.

Kuki mothers with the sacrificial 'Y' post in the background.



The Karnaphuli rapids near Barkal.





A typical Murung house in the heart of the Bandarban forest.

Murung men warming themselves around the fire lit in the thick forest valley.

The Master of Ceremonies, or the *Sara*, as the Murungs call him, is not a professional priest, but is generally nominated to conduct marriages or other ceremonies in each village. In fact, the Murungs do not believe in any form of worship and have a tribal religion of their own based on animism. According to them, there is an all-pervading spirit, *Torai*, which lives high up in the skies and controls all evil spirits that bring illness and misfortunes to them. Therefore, whenever the Murungs have to pacify an evil spirit, they first invoke the blessings of *Torai* to help them in warding off its ill effects by the set practice of killing a number of animals, birds or fowls at given places and offering them as a sacrifice.

The Murungs are extremely hardy and industrious people and possess exceptionally good health; but surprisingly enough, we find that in most cases both men and women are pot-bellied, probably because of their consuming large quantities of brown rice and drinking rain-water from the streams. In spite of the rigours of climate and heavy rains, these people enjoy a long span of life, ranging between 70 and 80 years, and in certain cases they live upto 100 years, without any serious ailments. For most diseases they depend on indigenous methods of treatment with jungle herbs, or they slaughter a pig or a number of fowls and make an offering to ward off the illness. The meat is distributed among the village folk and not thrown away in the jungle, as they do not have any sacrificial altars or special places of worship unlike other primitive tribes.

The Murungs, on the whole, are a peace-loving people, happy and contented in their surroundings, and therefore, hardly any cases of crime or theft are reported in this area. They, however, seek assistance from Government if their crops fail or their houses are washed away by perennial floods. The Government provides them with 'Jhoom' loans upto Rs. 50 (about £ 4/-) per family, on the recommendation of the Headman. The amount is recoverable in a single instalment within a period of one year.

Most of the vegetables and tobacco grown are consumed by themselves. Tobacco leaf is dried and used for smoking as cheroots as well as for chewing. They also make their own wine from paddy which is highly intoxicating and is consumed by everyone, young and old, in the family.

As in the case of marriage, the Murungs do not observe any special rites at the time of childbirth. The child is delivered by the village midwife, and both mother and child are confined to their room for nine days after the delivery. She is not given anything to eat except a little quantity of boiled rice with salt, nor is she allowed to come out of her room during this period for anything. After nine days, she is allowed to leave her room for bathing in the nearby stream. She then can start her normal household work.

In the event of death, certain rites are observed by the Murungs. The dead body is laid in the hall of the house for seven days, and if the family can afford, a few heads of pigs and chicken are killed and cooked for distribution along with boiled rice amongst the mourners. After seven days the body is burnt on the cremation ground, called CHENGRANG, reserved by each village by the bank of a nearby river or stream. Thereafter the ashes are collected in a piece of cloth and the bundle is placed

in a small bamboo box to be buried at the place of cremation where a 4 to 6 feet high structure of bamboo is made, with a white flag atop. This memorial remains by the riverside until it is washed away by rains during monsoons.

It is only when a person dies of an epidemic that his body is buried in the jungle, away from the settlement.

Like their customs and manners, the Murung dress is equally unique. The women and female children put on a brief wrap—*Wanklai*— about 9 inches wide, around their waist, leaving the two ends loose on the outer side of the left thigh. The *Wanklai* is made of thick home-spun dark blue cloth, with woven patterns in the middle and having small beads along the edges, lengthwise. The ends are kept loose to make it convenient for the wearer to walk or sit. The *Wanklai* is tied around the waist with the help of a sort of belt made of beads or metallic chains.

The men-folk wear an equally brief loin-cloth made of white cotton, with the long end hanging in front, between the legs. The Headmen or *Karbaris*, who have to go out of their reserves to the forest bazaars or the neighbouring towns, have to be more elaborate in their dress. They usually wear a *Lungi* or a loose lower garment, covering the body from the waist to the ankles, alongwith a bush-shirt of the Burmese style and a turban of white muslin. This attire, of course, is put off as soon as they finish their business and return home.

KUKI

The first account of the Kuki tribe was given in 1799, by a certain surgeon McCrea, who described these people as hunters and warriors, ruled by their hereditary chiefs, but divided into different clans. According to him, the Kukis were traditionally of the same origin as the Moghs, and lived in villages having 500 to 2,000 inhabitants, built on most inaccessible hills, and in houses with floors raised 6 ft., underneath which were kept the domestic animals. "When engaged in hostile expeditions", wrote McCrea, "they sleep at night in hammocks swung in trees, which gave rise to the fiction. . . . that they lived in trees." They were reported to be constantly at war with other neighbouring tribes, and in this pursuit they did not spare anyone from killing, except children, whom they made captives.

The Kukis first appeared in the hill country, south of Kachhar in Assam in early 19th century. By the middle of the same century, four large clans of the Kukis—Thadan, Shingson, Changsen, and Lhungum—after having been defeated by the Lushais, were allowed by the British to settle in Kachhar, on the border of the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Their remnants are still found around this area among the Lushai, Pankhu and Banjogi tribes. However, they hate to be called by the generic term of Kuki, as for the last two centuries the Kukis were indeed hated and dreaded in the whole area for their refractory nature. They were head-hunters and terrorised the other tribes by their constant raids. As a result, several punitive expeditions had to be sent against them in the difficult hill country, to suppress their nefarious activities. Finally, they were subdued and dispersed by the Chakmas who drove them to the north-east of the region from where they were subsequently ousted by the Moghs.

There used to be several clans of the Kukis in the Chittagong Hill Tracts in early

days. Some were reported to be very dark, while others had fair complexion like the Manipuris; but the majority resembled the Khasias of Assam, having strongly marked Mongolian features, with narrow eyes, high forehead, broad nostrils, long upper lip, high cheek bones and sparce growth of hair on the face. They wore long hair on the head, well greased with pig fat and dressed neatly. Ivory-mounted combs, heavy brass hairpins and curved bone or metal skewers were worn as ornaments for the added beauty of the hair-do.

The savage *Howlong*, the *Fannai*, and the *Lakher* clans, each of whom had a distinctive hair style, are not met with any more in the Hill Tracts. The men-folk among the Kukis are of fine muscular build and possess great power of endurance, although generally they are indolent and inclined to laze away their time.

The dress of the Kukis, like the Nagas, is scanty. They wear a white turban, which some of them decorate with the red plumes of the *Hattee Pakee* bird. The shoulder pouch and the cross belt for carrying the *Dao*, are made of leather, ornamented with cowrie-shells. The only other weapon used by them is javelin, but they usually carry the *Dao* and a shield of buffalo hide as a defensive weapon.

The Kuki women wear a short home-spun skirt called *Khejel*, embroidered with floral designs along the border. They also put on a colourful breast cloth, and cover their body with a long home-spun sheet during winter.

A Kuki woman finds herself too much involved in various household chores in addition to working on the fields. Such constant hardship, usually attended with anxiety of maternity, speedily deteriorates her health and physical beauty. In her maidenhood, however, she is a comely creature who takes certain interest in making her appearance attractive by dressing her hair, wearing colourful clothes and decorating her person with various ornaments. Her main ornaments consist of heavy brass or silver hairpins, necklaces of beads or silver coins, coiled bracelets and waist girdles. The waist girdles are of different types and designs made of brass, cowries or other ornamental objects stringed together.

They have also a curious method of piercing and distending the ear-lobes, for wearing ivory, wood or even stone discs, about 2″ to 3″ each in diameter. Both men and women have a special liking for necklaces of amber beads. These are greatly valued among them. The men also wear necklaces of buttons and earrings of cornelian pieces.

DEITIES

The Kukis are animists by faith. They, however, recognize a Supreme Being, whom they call *Puthen*, and who is regarded as a benevolent deity; but he is omniscient judge of man's actions, and awards punishments both in this world and in the hereafter, to those who deserve it. They recognise a future abode where the spirits of the dead reside. Their principal endeavour, however, is directed to propitiate the spirit of evil represented by *Ghumoishee*, the illegitimate son of *Puthen*, who has a wife, *Khuchoan*, as malignant as himself, and sacrifices are offered to appease their wrath. The household deity of the Kukis is called *Khomoungno*. They also believe in the spirits of forests, rivers, mountains and of each metal known to them.

The future world or the paradise of a Kuki, is some northern region where rice grows spontaneously and game abounds. He believes that in the paradise, all the enemies he has killed here, will be in attendance on him as slaves, and the animals he has eaten, will be found again as his farm stock. This belief in the future paradise has been considered to be responsible for a prevalence of blood feuds and head-hunting among the Kukis in the past.

The Kukis are monogamous, and although they usually marry within their tribe, there is no restriction to intermarry among other tribes of the Kuki group, such as Pankhu, Banjogi or Lushai. Marriages are usually arranged between adults, and the boy has to pay Rs. 250/300 to the parents of the girl, which is paid back if the wife forsakes the husband. Divorce from either side is allowed on reasonable grounds. The practice of remarrying widows is also prevalent.

The law of inheritance among the Kukis is rather interesting. The younger son succeeds to one half of the parental property, while the eldest gets only a quarter, and the other intermediate brothers share whatever remains after that.

By habit both men and women smoke excessively. The men smoke a kind of pipe with a bowl prepared from the root of bamboo, and having a long stem. Often the bowl is decorated with tracery work and a copper piece is invariably fixed at the bottom. The women use a peculiar type of pipe which resembles a *Hooka*. This is hollowed out of a bamboo root and attached on the top with a clay bowl. A bamboo or metal tube is fixed at the lower part of the pipe to draw smoke through it.

The Kukis are nomadic by nature. As soon as the cultivable lands on the hill-slopes around are exhausted for Jhooming, the entire settlement moves out to a new site and remains there till its surrounding lands yield just enough crop for sustainance.

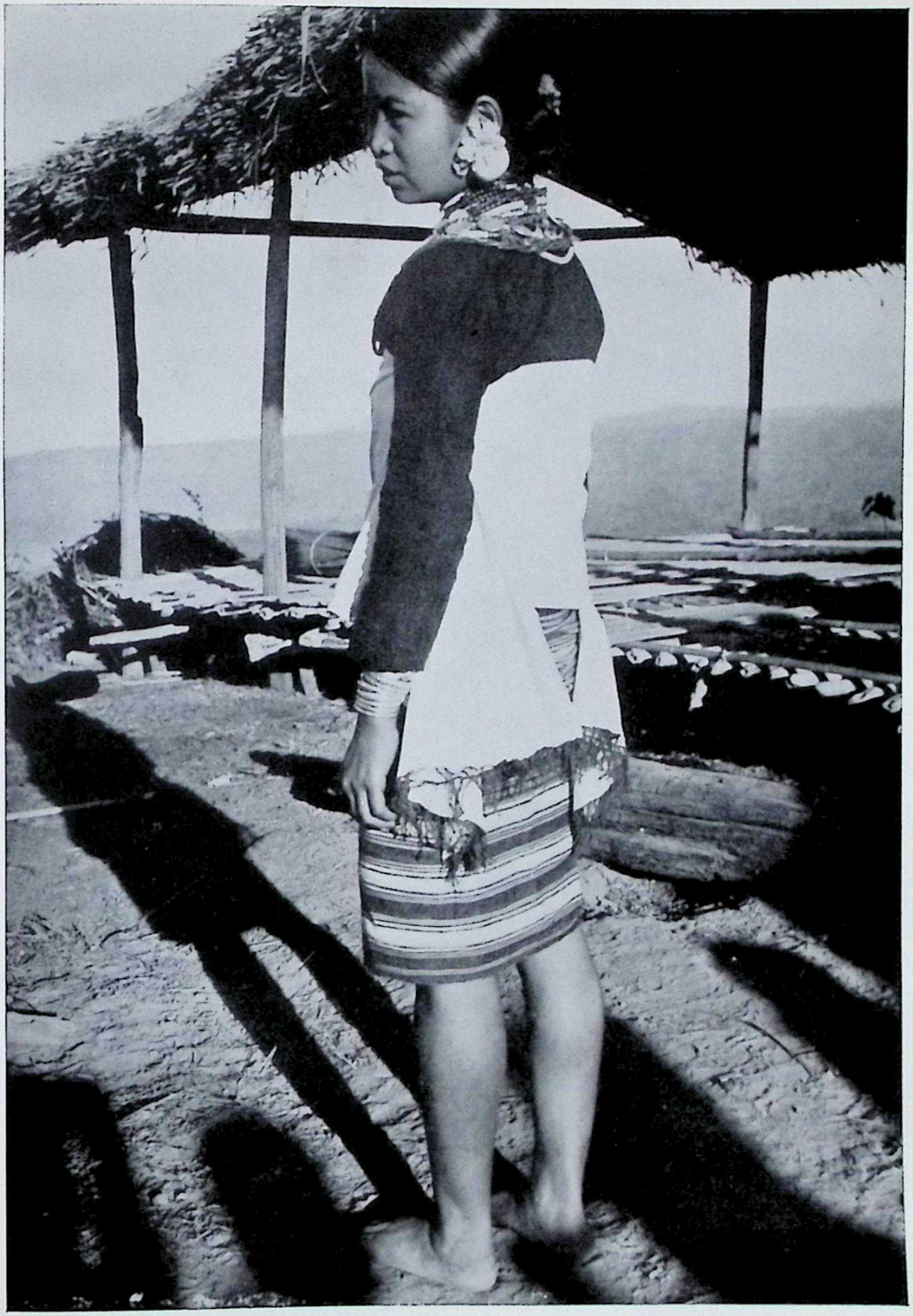
BIRTH AND DEATH

The first child born in a Kuki family is named by the wife's parents or her relations. Three days after the birth of a girl, and five days after that of a boy, a feast is given by the father of the child. The mother feeds the baby by putting a little quantity of the boiled rice in its mouth, after chewing it herself, and this feed is occasionally continued till the child is weaned.

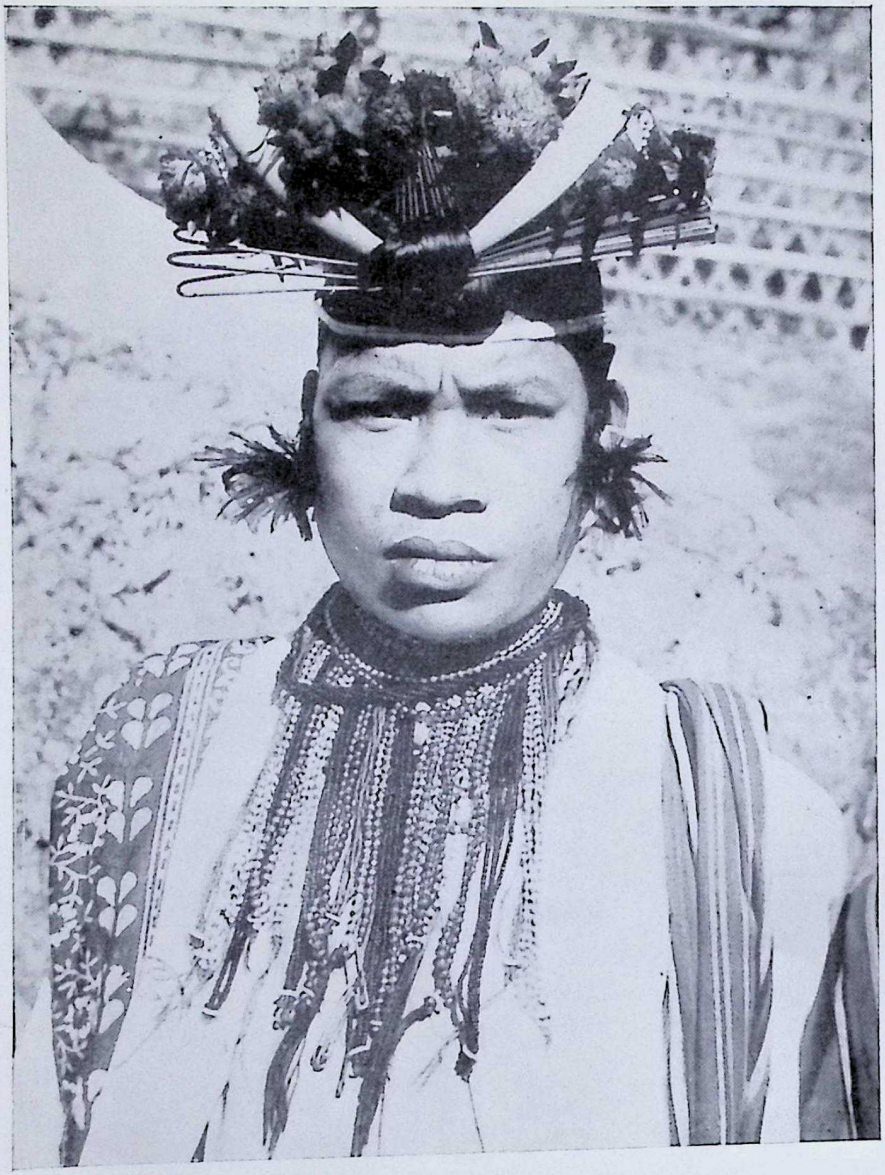
Usually the Kukis bury their dead, but the death rites greatly vary from tribe to tribe. As a universal practice, however, the dead body has to be kept in the house for some days before it is buried, and during this period the dead person's family has to provide a daily feast to the village community. Eventually the body is buried along with some food and drink, and around the grave a sort of fence is made with the skulls of animals slaughtered for the funeral feast. According to an old account, it was at one time considered essential that the skull of a freshly killed human victim should adorn the grave of a Kuki Chief. This custom was, however, abandoned in early 19th century.

TIPPERA

The *Tippera* tribe migrated from the Tripura Hill State long ago and mostly settl-



A Pankhu maiden from the Subhalong area in ceremonial attire.



A Chakma dancer in festive dress and headgear.

ed down in the northern region of the Mong Circle. Scattered settlements of this tribe are also met with in the Chakma and Bohmong Circles, but their number is insignificant. The Tipperas profess a form of Hinduism and observe many Hindu rites and ceremonies, but also follow animistic rites. By living in close association with other tribes of the Hill Tracts, the Tipperas have largely adopted identical customs, dress, mode of dwelling and ways of life.

Men wear the usual *Dhoti* or loin-cloth along with a home-spun jacket and a turban, while the womenfolk wear a coloured skirt, called *Reani*, a blouse and a headgear called *Kharakcha*. The design of the home-made skirt varies with each Sept or clan.

Their language belongs to the Tibeto-Burmese family, mixed up greatly with corrupt Bengali. An old authority on the subject divides them into 2 classes—the *Purana* and the *Jamatiya*—and 10 Septs. More recent scholars divide them into 36 Septs.

The Tipperas cremate their dead, and the ceremony is followed by a period of mourning and observance of the *Sraddha* like the Hindus. If the dead was a male person, the corpse is laid on 5 layers of the funeral pyre of wood, but if it was a female, then 7 layers of wood are piled at the cremation ground. The *Ojha*, or the Master of Ceremonies, exercises a great influence on the social and religious life of the tribe, as he is supposed to have direct contact and influence over evil spirits and conducts all religious rites. Marriages are arranged and members of the various Septs freely intermarry. There is also no special bar to one's marrying outside the tribe.

TANCHANGYA

The *Tanchangyas* are, in fact, a sub-tribe of the Chakmas, but due to their living on hill-tops, far away from the riversides, they are called Tanchangyas, or the Chakmas living on hill-tops. They are sub-divided into half a dozen Septs who intermarry freely. It is noteworthy that, like the Murungs, the age of the bridegroom among these people, too, has to be less than that of the bride. A boy of 14-15 years would generally be married to a girl of about 17-18 years. There is, however, no restriction about pre-marriage mixing between the sexes provided a pregnancy does not occur, as in that case the youth has to pay a fine and also offer a pig to the community for the offence.

In customs, manners and dress, the Tanchangyas closely resemble the Chakmas.

BANJOGI AND PANKHU

The *Banjogis* and *Pankhus* have a great similarity in their language, customs and manners, and in fact, they claim a common ancestry from two brothers. Undoubtedly, they belong to the Tibeto-Burmese group of tribes, and alongwith the Lushais. are considered to form part of the Kuki group.

It appears that in the past the hair style constituted one of the important distinguishing features of the various tribes of the Kuki group, for while a Pankhu man would have his long, greased hair gathered up in a knot at the back of the head, a Banjogi would tie up the hair knot on the top, and the womenfolk of both would part their long hair at the middle. However, now they are not very particular about their hair-do. On ceremonial occasions now-a-days, the Pankhus tie up their hair in

a knot on the forehead, though normally they hang it on at the back.

For all practical purposes, the Pankhus are animists, although they profess to worship Siva. In fact, the conception of religion among them is very crude and a great variety of good and evil spirits form the core of their pantheon. The winter harvest is immediately followed by a festival when they perform the so-called 'Siva Puja'. On this occasion a rectangular split-bamboo mat is hoisted aloft on a bamboo pole in an open space within the village, and a 'Y'-shaped wooden post is erected nearby on the ground. A sacrificial animal, like a buffalo, cow, pig, goat, goyal or bison is tied with this 'Y' post, while the young girls and men dance around to the accompaniment of music. The animal is ultimately killed with a spear or bow-and-arrows and its meat is cooked and eaten alongwith wine, with all the spirit of festivity.

It is equally interesting to note that the Kukis eat all sorts of animals and reptiles found in the forest. Their staple food, however, is boiled rice only, and the meat of the animals or birds provides variety to their normal fare. Similarly fish cut into bits without removing the scales or entrails, is boiled in water and eaten as a delicacy. All the members of the family sit in a circle and eat together from a wooden plate placed in the middle. However, the daughter-in-law or the son-in-law would not partake of the meat alongwith her or his father-in-law.

As a practice, they eat only one type of food at a time, either boiled rice, or meat, or fish, although they may possess more than one thing with them. Both sexes are also inveterate smokers.

Both Banjogis and Pankhus bury their dead. The dead body is washed, wrapped in a home-spun sheet and laid in a sitting position, with face towards north. A grave is then dug just outside the house, and the body, after being dressed and bedecked with ornaments etc., is covered with a bamboo-mat and buried by placing a wooden plank each at the bottom and the top of the grave.

A log of wood is also planted upon the grave to display the head of the sacrificial animal—a bufallo, cow or pig, along with some fruits like banana or papaya, which the dead person had liked most while alive. Before burial, however, the relatives of the dead person have a special meal prepared of the meat of the sacrificial animal, alongwith their favourite rice wine. This is followed by weeping individually beside the corpse by every one present on the occasion. In case of any visitation of epidemic or cholera, they offer prayers to 'Siva', with a basketful of rice, to propitiate him.

The Banjogis and Pankhus are generally monogamous, but divorce or remarriage among both sexes is allowed. Marriage is arranged by the parents for which the dowry sum has to be paid by the groom. The youngest son inherits the major share in the parental property.

LUSHAI

The *Lushai* tribe, living in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, forms only a small portion of the ethnic group whose majority is found in the adjoining Assam and Burma areas along the Lushai Hills. The Lushais on this side of the border are mainly concentrated in the Mong Circle. They are mostly Christianised (Adventist or Baptist),

A group of Chakma dancers dressed for a festive occasion, seen in Rangamati.

With spear in hand, a young man kills the sacrificial cow at the end of the 'Sachiya Kom' ceremony.

and have their dialect written in Romanised characters.

The Lushais of the Ramgarh area have their own Church and have adopted Western dress, but in habits, customs and mode of living, they retain largely the characteristics of their kindred tribes like Banjogis and Pankhus.

KUMI

The word *Kumi* or *Khami*, is said to mean a 'dog-man' in the Arakanese language. This curious name has perhaps been given to these people by other tribal folk because of the fact that the members of this tribe wear a scanty loin-cloth in such a manner that one end of it hangs behind like a dog's tail. Besides, these people are known to have a great propensity for the dog's meat as a favourite food. They are mostly found in the southern parts of the Bohmong Circle, living on the hill-tops, while some are scattered across the border in the Akyab District of Burma and northern Arakan. The Kumi tribe is sub-divided into two groups—the *Awa Khami* and the *Ahraing Khami*. Their respective dialects differ from each other.

The Kumi women usually wear a brief wrap, about 6 to 8 inches wide, tied around the waist, and open on the left side. The upper part of the body remains uncovered. The men-folk are occasionally found without anything on their bare body. Both sexes grow long hair which they dress in a peculiar fashion.

By faith, the Kumis are animists, and bear close similarity to the Murungs in their habits, customs, dress and mode of life. They burn their dead on funeral pyre, and like the Murungs, do not observe any period of mourning.

CONCLUSION

Life and conditions of these tribes have not changed much ever since their legendary migration to this country from the Arakan and Lushai hills, according to one tradition, or from the Indo-Gangetic plain, according to another. However, with the present pace of development in East Pakistan, the tribesmen are bound to benefit in the not too distant future. Already, the mighty Karnaphuli Multi-purpose Project and the huge paper mills at Chandragona have opened new avenues of progress for the Chakma and Mogh tribes in the heart of the Hill Tracts. Similarly, with the completion of the proposed Sangu Multi-purpose Project in the Bandarban Sub-division, the life and economy of these hitherto neglected jungle dwellers, will certainly get a big push forward after hundreds of years of sheer indolence.

It will, of course, be of interest to watch how the tribal folk react to a revolutionary change in their outlook when the development projects in various fields offer them better opportunities of living and mixing freely with comparatively more advanced people belonging to the same land.

2. REHABILITATION WORK IN CHITTAGONG HILL TRACTS

One of the major development projects affecting the people and economy of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, has been the 120,000 K.W. Karnaphuli Multi-purpose Project which came into partial operation in 1963. The Project, with a total catchment area of 253 Sq. miles, submerged 50,000 acres of settled cultivable land, which is about 40 per cent of the total cultivable area of the District. As a result thereof, over 18,000 families, or approximately 100,000 people, were displaced from the District capital area of Rangamati and 125 adjoining Mouzas. A Rehabilitation Scheme involving an expenditure of Rs. 19.6 million was, therefore, approved in advance in 1959, for resettlement of the displaced persons and for providing them with usual amenities by construction of new roads, hospitals, residential quarters, schools, dispensaries, drinking water facilities, markets and bazaars etc. The rehabilitation work is in progress and is scheduled to be completed by June, 1965.

In this connection, 10,271 families have so far been rehabilitated over 18,690 acres of flat cultivable land and 21,477 acres of hilly land. The largest concentration of rehabilitated population is at Kassalong where 3,734 families have been settled over 10,000 acres of de-reserved forest. The other rehabilitation areas are in the Chengi Valley and the non-submergence areas of Ramgarh, Rangamati and Bandarban Subdivisions.

Since it was not possible to provide enough flat cultivable lands to all the displaced persons, a large number of them were brought under Plantation Programme, and, as a result, gardening on hill-slopes has started yielding good results. The plantations taken up under this programme include cultivation of pineapple, orange, cashewnut, mango, litchi, lemon, guava and jackfruit, besides rubber, as may be seen from the details given at the end of this Chapter. Among the planters, 1,921 are ex-landholder families and 2,650 Jhoomias. During 1965, which is the final year for the execution of this Scheme, it is proposed to initiate Plantation Programme among the remaining ex-landholders and a few other Jhoomia families.

For the future, a fresh scheme has been drawn up for the economic rehabilitation of those Jhoomia families which will still remain un-rehabilitated, and also for the proper maintenance of the plantations. The estimated cost of the new scheme,

covering a further period of five years, comes to over Rs. 10 million. The new scheme includes, besides plantation work, the establishment of fisheries and reclamation of bumpy lands in the Hill Tracts.

Fisheries: This item has been included in the new scheme with a view to providing the displaced persons, residing in the submergence areas, a subsidiary means of livelihood. There are about 10,000 families, both ex-landholders and Jhoomias, settled in the submergence areas, out of which it is proposed to initiate 3,000 families into fishing. Three families will constitute one Unit, and in this way 1,000 Fishery Units will be introduced.

Nylon yarn and fishing boats will also be provided to these Units. The total requirements of material required for the next four years comes to Rs. 1.4 million, which will be given to various Units in the shape of loans recoverable in five equal instalments.

Reclamation of Bumpy Land: Extensive bumpy lands is available for reclamation in the submergence areas. About 5,000 acres of such land will be made available in blocks. It is felt that with adequate financial assistance, considerable areas can be reclaimed for growing crops which can provide a partial answer to the problem of shortage of flat lands within the submergence areas. It is estimated that in a period of three years from 1965-66, about 1,000 acres of bumpy land can be reclaimed by giving financial assistance to the settlers in the shape of loans recoverable in five equal instalments. The total amount required for this purpose would come to Rs. 300,000.

Miscellaneous: Four Carpentry Centres are being run in the District under the present Rehabilitation Project. 93 persons have since received training and another 68 persons are now being trained in these centres. As timber is abundantly available in the Hill Tracts, there is a growing demand for trained carpenters. Displaced persons, after having one year's training in these centres can, thus, take to carpentry as a profession.

Power Pump Irrigation in Kassalong Rehabilitation Area:

In the Kassalong area, in view of the concentration over de-reserved forest, a scheme for providing subsidised power pump irrigation is being executed in cooperation with the Agricultural Development Corporation. Under the Scheme, an area of 5,000 acres is expected to be provided with pump irrigation by 1967-68, at a total cost of over half a million rupees.

DISTRIBUTION UNDER REHABILITATION SCHEME

Pineapple suckers	12,81,000	Guava	5,800
Mulberry sapplings	3,52,000	Banana	8,300
Orange seedlings	5,03,000	Litchi	5,500
Cashewnut seedlings	4,100	Mango grafts	2,300
Cashewnut seeds	91 mds.	Lemon gooties	8,000
Rubber stumps	148,000	Lemon grafts	3,400

Total amount sanctioned for Rehabilitation Scheme:

1st Five-Year Plan	Rs. 5.2 Million
2nd Five Year Plan	Rs. 14.4 ,,
Total:	Rs. 19.6 Million

Amount spent upto 1963-64	Rs. 15.6	Million
Budget provision for 1964-65	Rs. 4.0	,,
Total:	Rs. 19.6	Million

Cottage Industries Centres:

i)	*Weaving Centre*		5
	a)	Trained	167
	b)	Under Training	90
ii)	*Carpentry Centre:*		5
	a)	Trained	93
	b)	Under Training	68
	c)	Persons Trained *Sericulture*	20

Other works:

Roads:

a)	Replacement of roads	24 miles.
b)	New roads	27½ ,,
c)	Improvement of roads	55 ,,

Buildings:

Offices	9	Hospitals and Dispensaries	7
Quarters	77	Markets and Bazaars	17
Model town	1	Schools	78
Food godowns	10	Transit Camps	11

View of the Bazaar in Bandarban town, one of the Sub- divisional Headquarters in the Chittagong Hill Trac

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View of the Bazaar in Bandarban town, one of the Sub-divisional Headquarters in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

A Mogh family from a village near Bandarban town.

3. DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Since the birth of Pakistan in August, 1947, considerable attention has been devoted towards the development of the hitherto neglected areas of the Chittagong Hill Tracts. At Rangamati, the District headquarters, important Government Departments dealing with Health, Education, Food, Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Public Relations, Roads and Buildings, Forestry, Cooperative Societies etc., were established for undertaking development programmes in their respective spheres. In early 1960, the Basic Democracies were also introduced in the District, and as a result of elections, held at different levels, a *District Council*, with 11 *Thana Councils* and 39 *Union Councils*, with a total membership of 405, were established in the Hill Tracts.

The pace of development activities in various sectors may be guaged from the brief account given below:—

Roads: During the Second Plan period, development of 6 roads, viz., Chittagong-Rangamati Road, Rangamati Town Road, Guimara-Khagrachari Road, Panchari-Logong Road, Dighinala-Marishya Road, and Swalok-Bandarban Road was taken up at a cost of over Rs. 12 million. The work on these roads, covering over 100 miles is due to be completed by June, 1965, as per details given at the end.

Fisheries: Under the Second Plan, Fisheries Department took up a scheme to develop fish in the Karnaphuli Lake. Accordingly fish fries of various species are being liberated in the lake each year, and about 300 maunds of fish is being netted daily during season. This has opened a new avenue of livelihood for the local people.

Cooperatives: Introduction of pissiculture in the District has also paved the way for the formation of numerous Cooperative Societies. The bulk of the fish supplied to Chittagong town comes today from the Hill Tracts, and in order to give a fair deal to the fishermen and also to the consumers, cooperative marketing is being encouraged.

Forestry: The two schemes under operation with the Forest Department are the *Soft Wood Plantation* and the *Control of Jhooming*. The estimated cost of these two schemes comes to over Rs. 4.2 million. As considerable forest wealth of the Hill Tracts has been submerged by the newly found Kaptai Lake, it is felt that plantation of soft wood is essential. In the same manner the eradication of the wasteful method of *Jhoom* cultivation is attempted through the Jhoom Control Scheme.

Education: At present there are 8 High Schools in the Hill Tracts, including 3 Government High Schools. Out of these, 4 High Schools are being developed at a cost of Rs. 29,000 each. Besides, there are 5 Junior High Schools teaching upto Class VIII, which are also being developed at a cost of Rs. 10,000 each. There are also 6 English Middle Schools teaching upto Class VI.

There were 222 Primary Schools till 1964. Under the scheme for introduction of free primary education in this District, 724 Primary Schools would be established in the Hill Tracts in different phases over a period of four years. Out of these, 724 Primary Schools, 69 have already been established and a sum of Rs. 1.8 million has so far been sanctioned for development of the 222 existing Primary Schools and 69 new Schools. There are 437 teachers (including 5 lady teachers) working in 291 Primary Schools. Among them, 75 are trained and the rest untrained. There is only one Teachers Training Centre in the District for improving the standard of teaching at the Primary level. More training centres are being envisaged in the near future.

The number of students on the rolls of Primary Schools in the Hill Tracts at present is 29,153.

It has been decided to set up an Intermediate College at Rangamati at a cost of Rs. 650,000. The site has been selected and a sum of Rs. 150,000 has since been placed with the Communications and Buildings Department for the construction of the building.

Health: The construction of a Rural Health Centre at Marishya, a new Model Town, has been completed at a cost of Rs. 440,000. Another Rural Health Centre, costing Rs. 394,000, is nearing completion at Tabalchari in the Ramgarh Sub-division. A T.B. Clinic at a cost of over Rs. 113,000 has also been constructed, and two Child Welfare Centres, costing over Rs. 157,000, are under construction.

Agriculture: During the Second Five-Year Plan period, 19 Seed Stores and one Intermediary Godown were constructed in the Hill Tracts. The Soil Conservation Scheme at Ramgarh, costing about Rs. 400,000, has started yielding excellent results and a number of similar schemes are proposed to be taken up shortly in the District.

DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Sl. No.	Name of Project	Year of		Estimated Cost	Remarks
		Commencement	Completion		
1	2	3	4	5	6
				Rs.	
	AGRICULTURE SECTOR				
1.	Construction of 10 Union Seed Stores at: Rangamati, Belaichari, Chitmoram, Burighat, Tintilla, Sindukchari, Mahalchari, Dighinala, Lakshmichari, and Taracha.	1962-63	February/64	141,190	Completed.

1	2	3	4	5	6
				Rs.	
2.	Construction of Intermediary Godown at Rangamati.	1961-62	August/64	77,304	Completed.
3.	Construction of 9 Union Seed Stores at: Dumdumya, Marishya, Matiranga, Belchari Longong, Babuchara, Noapatong, Balipara Headman para and Thanchi.	1963-64	June/65	127,710	Work is in progress.
4.	Soil Conservation scheme at Ramgarh.	1963-64	June/66	400,000	-do-
	EDUCATION SECTOR				
1.	Establishment of Intermediate College at Rangamati.	1963-64	June/65	650,000	Site selected.
2.	Construction of additional building for Rangamati Government High School.	1963-64	June/64	135,000	Completed.
3.	Introduction of Free Primary Education in Chittagong Hill Tracts				
	a) Development of 222 existing Primary Schools.	1963-64	June/70	888,000	In progress.
	b) Improvement of 14 New Primary Schools.	1963-64	June/70	112,000	-do-
4.	Development of Shah High School at Rangamati.	1964-65	June/65	15,000	-do-
5.	Development of T. K. Junior High School at Tubalchari.	1964-65	June/65	10,000	In progress
	HEALTH SECTOR				
1.	Construction of Rural Health Centre at Marishya.	1963-64	August/64	440,000	Completed.
2.	Construction of Rural Health Centre at Tubalchari.	1963-64	October/64	394,000	Nearing completion.
3.	Construction of T. B. Clinic	1963-64	..	113,310	Completed.
4.	Child Welfare Centre at Bandarban.	1963-64	August/64	78,600	Nearing completion.
5.	Child Welfare Centre at Rupakari.	1963-64	June/65	78,600	In progress.
6.	X-Ray Block in Rangamati Hospital.	1963-64	..	50,000	Completed.
	FOOD SECTOR				
1.	Construction of 3 Food Godowns at Chandraghona, Barkal and Tubalchari.	1962-63	October/64	348,000	-do-

1	2	3	4	5	6
				Rs.	
2.	Construction of Food Godown at Mahalchari.	1963-64	December/64	116,000	Completed
	SOCIAL WELFARE SECTOR				
1.	Construction of Youth Welfare Centre at Rangamati.	1963-64	June/64	27,500	-do-
	LIVESTOCK SECTOR				
1.	Construction Veterinary Dispensary at Dighinala.	1963-64	December/64	16,200	-do-
2.	Sub-Divisional Veterinary Hospital at Bandarban.	1964-65	June/65	54,000	In progress.
3.	Thana Veterinary Dispensary at Lama and Marishya.	1964-65	June/65	34,000	-do-
	COOPERATIVE SECTOR				
1.	Construction of 3 Co-operative Godwons at Guimara, Bhaibonchara and Maischari.	1962-63	June/65	31,020	-do-
2.	3 Godowns at Lama, Dighinala and Rajbilla.	1963-64	June/65	31,200	-do-
3.	4 small Godowns at Sabekhyong, Sealbukka, Bangalhalia and Ghilachari.	1964-65	June/65	41,360	-do-
	INDUSTRIES SECTOR (EPSIC)				
1.	Construction of Sericulture Nursery at Chandraghona.	..	..	549,000	Nearing completion.
	ROADS SECTOR				
1.	Chittagong-Rangamati Road	1960-61	June/65	2,408,600	-do-
2.	Swalok-Bandarban Road (14 miles).	1963-64	June/65	2,588,000	In progress.
3.	Rangamati Town Road (6 miles).	1960-61	June/65	1,619,500	-do-
4.	Gulimara-Khagrachari Road (18.5 miles).	1960-61	June/65	2,550,000	-do-
5.	Panchari-Logong Road (7.5 miles).	1960-61	June/65	748,000	-do-
6.	Dighinala-Marishya Road (20.5 miles)	1960-61	June/65	2,655,000	-do-

1	2	3	4	5	6
				Rs.	
	FISHERIES SECTOR				
1.	Development and exploitation of Karnaphuli Fisheries.	1960-61	1970-71	1,980,000	In progress
	HOUSING AND SETTLEMENT SECTOR				
1.	Shifting of Sub-Divisional Headquarters from Ramgarh to Khagrachari.	1960-61	June/65	2,060,000	Nearing completion.
2.	New Circuit House at Rangamati.	1962-63	June/64	110,700	Completed.
	EPWAPDA SECTOR				
1.	Karnaphuli Multi-purpose Project at Kaptai.	..	..	51,768,578	
2.	Sangu Multi-purpose Project	..	..	2,164,000	
3.	Erosion of Nakapa Mouza in Feni Valley.	..	June/65	150,000	
	FORESTRY SECTOR				
1.	Pilot Scheme for control Jhuming.	11-2-61	30-6-65	2,714,000	In progress.
2.	Soft wood Plantation ..	1-7-60	30-6-65	1,492,000	-do-
	PIDC SECTOR				
1.	Chittagong Hill Tracts Timber extraction.	..	..	1,050,000	-do-
2.	Chittagong Hill Tracts Saw Mill at Kaptai.	..	..	4,000,000	-do-
	PUBLIC HEALTH SECTOR				
1.	Sinking of $1\frac{1}{2}''$ dia. Tube-wells	1964-65	June/65	86,000	-do-
2.	Water supply scheme at Rangamati.	July/64	June/65	25,000	Not taken up yet.

APPENDIX

PLACES OF INTEREST

Kaptai: One of the most picturesque spots in the heart of the Hill Tracts, Kaptai is 38 miles away from the port-town of Chittagong, linked by a fine metalled road as well as by the Karnaphuli river. It has a population of 4,073. With the completion of the Karnaphuli Multi-purpose Project, nearly 253 sq. miles of its catchment area has recently been turned into the largest man-made lake in the Sub-continent. Kaptai is, thus, fast becoming a popular tourist resort.

Chandragona: About 25 miles upstream from Chittagong is Chandragona Bazaar, with a population of 4,442. It is the principal centre of timber, bamboo, cotton and sunn grass extraction. Here, in the enchanting surroundings of an ever-green valley, the biggest paper mill in Asia has been established on the Karnaphuli river. Its annual production capacity is 30,000 tons of writing and printing paper, made from the locally grown bamboo. The area around Chandragona is rich in natural beauty and wild life.

Rangamati: 10 miles north-east of Kaptai, and 48 miles from Chittagong by road is Rangamati, (population: 6,416), the District headquarters of Chittagong Hill Tracts. The foundation-stone of the new town was laid by President Ayub in January, 1960, as the old Rangamati town was to come within the catchment area of the Kaptai Dam. The new town is fast growing as the hub of government and public activities. Rangamati is also the seat of the Chakma Chief,

Barkal: Situated in the Subhalong Valley, 26 miles north-east of Rangamati. It is an important centre for timber, bamboo, cotton and oil-seeds, and provides plenty of wild game.

Ramgarh; Sub-divisional headquarters in the Mong Circle, Ramgarh has a population of 4,539. It is a fine spot for hunting, hiking and climbing.

Bandarban: Sub-divisional headquarters in the Bohmong Circle in the southern part of the Hill Tracts District. It is located on the bank of Sangu river in picturesque surroundings. Bandarban is also the seat of Bohmong Chief, and has a mixed population of 3,047, comprising Moghs, Chakmas and plainsmen. The town is growing into an important centre of cotton and timber trade as it is connected with Dohazari railhead by both river and road.

Chimbuk: About 17 miles away from Bandarban, connected by road, is Chimbuk, situated about 2000 ft. above sea level. It is a part of Sitamura Range and provides a beautiful panoramic view of the surrounding country.

Alikhyong: Situated about 21 miles south of Kaptai, Alikhyong is one of the best spots for big game hunting and is becoming a popular tourist resort.

Mainimukh: It is situated on the river Maini, about 32 miles from Rangamati. Hunting facilities are available at this place.

END

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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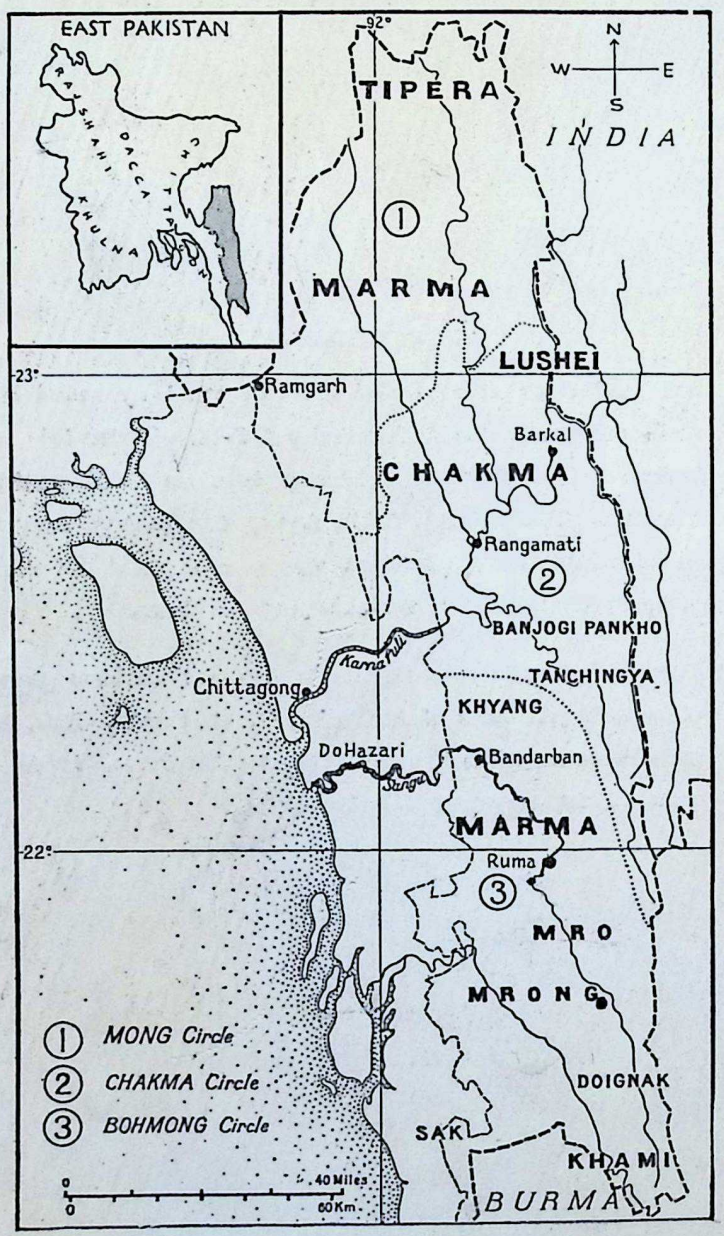
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